

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (original): Side wall (1) of a plant for the continuous casting of metal strip (5) between two counter-rotating rolls (2, 2') having horizontal axes and being internally cooled, the surfaces of which define a casting space confined laterally by two side walls (1) made of refractory, of the type comprising:

- a support plate (6) on the front face of which a recess (7) is made;
- an insert (9) made of hard material placed around the periphery of the recess (7);
- a lining (11) that fills the remainder of the recess (7);

characterized in that the front face (12), turned towards the casting space, of the said lining (11) is set back by a maximum distance (d) from the front face (13) of the insert (9) over at least part of its length.

2. (original): Side wall (1) according to Claim 1, characterized in that the front face (12), turned towards the casting space, of the said lining (11) is set back from the front face of the insert (9) over its entire length.

3. (currently amended): Side wall (1) according to Claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that over a length ( $h_1$ ), starting from ~~the~~ an upper edge of the recess (7), the lining (11) has a constant

thickness (e) and in that over a length ( $h_2$ ), the lining (11) has a thickness that increases up to a level where the said thickness is equal to that of the insert (9).

4. (currently amended): Side wall (1) according to Claim 3, characterized in that the said level where the said thickness is equal to that of the insert (9) is ~~the~~ a lower edge (14) of the recess (7).

5. (currently amended): Side wall (1) according to Claim 1, characterized in that the lining (11) has a thickness that increases from ~~the~~ an upper edge of the recess (7) down to ~~the~~ a lower edge (14) of the recess (7).

6. (currently amended): Side wall (1) according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 5~~ Claim 1, characterized in that the distance (d) is equal to 10 mm or more.

7. (original): Side wall (1) according to Claim 6, characterized in that the distance (d) is between 80 and 150 mm.

8. (currently amended): Side wall (1) according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 7~~ Claim 1, characterized in that it includes an appendage (15) over the width of the front face (12) of the lining (11), the said appendage (15) being designed to overhang the surface of the liquid metal present in the casting space.